

on State and local governments. State and local homeland security grant programs are essential to achieving and maintaining preparedness capabilities, and they can be strengthened and improved with input from stakeholders and the establishment of sound performance metrics.

This bill seeks to improve the way grant programs are administered and managed by FEMA, and will ensure that Congress is informed of the ongoing planning at FEMA for improving measures of preparedness and eliminating duplicative requirements placed on grantees.

I urge my colleagues to support the measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as you heard, this is commonsense legislation that will streamline FEMA's efforts to enhance our Nation's preparedness and response capacity. All we're trying to do is to make sure that we get rid of any unnecessary rules and regulations that cause our local folks problems. Number two, we're also trying to make sure that we measure the results. If we're going to spend billions of dollars on grants, we've just got to make sure that we measure those particular results.

The bottom line is, Mr. Speaker, we're trying to focus on the customers, and the customers are the recipients of these grants. I certainly want to thank our ranking member, Mr. ROGERS. He's done an outstanding job there in the committee. I look forward to working with him not only on this legislation to make it law but certainly on other pieces of legislation. I urge all my colleagues to vote "aye."

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3980, the "Redundancy Elimination and Enhanced Performance for Preparedness Grants Act."

This legislation, introduced by Mr. CUELLAR, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response, requires FEMA to assess the performance of its homeland security grant program and work towards addressing any identified deficiencies.

The legislation was developed based on finding from an October subcommittee hearing where FEMA testified as to the status of the agency's efforts to establish performance measurements for preparedness grants.

At the hearing, we learned that that FEMA's efforts to implement statutory performance metrics-related requirements are fragmented and poorly integrated. As a result, FEMA is unable to measure how the \$29 billion in homeland security grants appropriated since 2002 have improved the nation's overall level of preparedness. Without these much needed performance metrics, FEMA continues to impose redundant grant reporting requirements on State and local governments including those in my home State of Mississippi.

Not only are these redundant reporting requirements costly and time-consuming for State and local officials to prepare, but there is significant evidence that, taken together,

they still do not provide FEMA with information necessary to measure the return on investment from federal grants.

Although there have been some improvements in FEMA's administration of homeland security grants, such as the improvements in grant guidance and technical assistance provided to State and local applicants, we still have a ways to go.

H.R. 3980 would complement these efforts by directing FEMA to work with State and local stakeholders to identify and eliminate these redundant grant reporting requirements.

Specifically, H.R. 3980 would eliminate much of the red-tape and improve the performance of FEMA grant programs. The bill requires FEMA to develop a strategy, with timelines, to establish performance metrics for its homeland security grants and provides direction to complete a program assessment of its homeland security grants. These steps are designed to improve the agency's performance, productivity and accountability to the taxpayers. It will also provide Congress with better information on FEMA's performance to allow us to conduct more effective oversight and ensure that taxpayer money is being used efficiently and effectively.

Again, thank you for the consideration of this important legislation.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3980, the Redundancy Elimination and Enhanced Performance for Preparedness Grants Act. This legislation directs FEMA to streamline its grants reporting process to make it more efficient and informative, and it eliminates redundant requests for information.

I would like to acknowledge Speaker PELOSI and Chairman THOMPSON for their leadership in bringing this important bill to the floor. I would also like to thank my colleague Congressman CUELLAR, who worked so hard authoring this important legislation holding FEMA accountable for our taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Speaker, on October 27, as a member of the Subcommittee on Emergency Communication, Preparedness, and Response, I heard testimony from both FEMA officials and state and local government officials about the new grants tracking program currently being tested. State and local officials, including the mayor of Los Angeles in my home state of California, urged the federal government to reconsider their use of this program. In the words of the mayor, "all the reports that it generates provide no guidance or value for assessing homeland security investments."

H.R. 3980 directs FEMA to identify and address the problems it is experiencing with grants reporting and tracking. This legislation is almost a direct response to the concerns raised to Congressman CUELLAR and me by the mayor of Los Angeles about the FEMA grants reporting process. I am proud that this legislation addresses those concerns. When it comes to homeland security and taxpayer dollars, we simply cannot afford to be wasting time or money on programs that offer no guidance or value. So I am pleased to champion H.R. 3980, which addresses this problem.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I support this bill because it will make our grant process more efficient and informative. Redundant reporting requirements will be eliminated, and communities and organizations will be able to better focus on doing the work they need to do to keep our nation safe.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3980.

Mr. CUELLAR. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CUELLAR) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3980, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ENHANCING SECURITY TO RAIL AND MASS TRANSIT LINES

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 28) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Transportation Security Administration should, in accordance with the congressional mandate provided for in the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, enhance security against terrorist attack and other security threats to our Nation's rail and mass transit lines, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 28

Whereas the Transportation Security Administration is uniquely positioned to lead the efforts to secure our Nation's rail and mass transit systems and other modes of surface transportation against terrorist attack as a result of expertise developed over six years of securing our Nation's commercial air transportation system;

Whereas the successes of the Transportation Security Administration's National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program has furthered the Transportation Security Administration's ability to secure our Nation's transportation systems against terrorist attack by preventing and protecting against explosives threats;

Whereas each weekday 11,300,000 passengers depend on our Nation's mass transit systems as a means of transportation;

Whereas rail and mass transit systems serve as an enticing target for terrorists and terrorist organizations, such as Al Qaeda, as evidenced by the March 11, 2004, attack on the Madrid, Spain, rail system, the July 7, 2005, attack on the London, England, mass transit system, and the July 11, 2006, and November 26, 2008, attacks on the Mumbai, India, rail system;

Whereas the Transportation Security Administration Authorization Act of 2009, which was passed by the House of Representatives on June 4, 2009, in an overwhelming and bipartisan manner, expresses Congress' commitment to bolstering the security of rail and mass transit systems; and

Whereas securing our Nation's rail and mass transit systems against terrorist attack and other security threats is essential due to their impact on our Nation's economic stability and the continued functioning of our national economy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the Transportation Security Administration should—

(1) continue to enhance security against terrorist attack and other security threats to our Nation's rail and mass transit systems and other modes of surface transportation, including as provided for in the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-53) and the Transportation Security Administration Authorization Act of 2009 (H.R. 2200 in the 111th Congress);

(2) continue development of the National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program, which has proven to be an effective tool in securing against explosives threats to our Nation's rail and mass transit systems, with particular attention to the application of its training standards and the establishment of a reliable source of domestically bred canines;

(3) improve upon the success of the Online Learning Center by providing increased person-to-person professional development programs to ensure those responsible for securing our surface transportation systems against terrorist attack are highly trained in both securing those systems against terrorist attack and professional relations with the traveling public; and

(4) continue to secure our Nation's mass transit and rail systems against terrorist attack and other security threats, so as to ensure the security of commuters on our Nation's rail and mass transit systems and prevent the disruption of rail lines critical to our Nation's economy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 28 expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that TSA should increase and enhance its efforts to secure rail and mass transit systems in ways that are consistent with the 9/11 Act and H.R. 2200.

Let me first of all say, Mr. Speaker, that in addition to this legislation, as we stand on the floor today and watch the actions in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as we see the world changing from Mumbai to Madrid, we recognize the crucialness of national security and homeland security. And so this legislation is to emphasize the importance of expanding our oversight and response to the idea of mass transit and rail transportation.

I introduced this resolution because deadlines in the 9/11 Act have passed

without being satisfied, which is inexcusable given the risks faced by our Nation's rail and mass transit systems. In addition, I authored H.R. 2200, the TSA authorization bill, which included several elements that sought to enhance TSA's surface transportation efforts. That bill passed in an overwhelmingly bipartisan manner earlier this year. As we wait for our friends in the Senate to act on H.R. 2200, I believe that the House agreeing to this resolution recommit to our goal of TSA securing these modes of transportation.

Let me first of all acknowledge the professional men and women that work for the Transportation Security Administration. I am gratified to know that progress is being made of a new administrator for that agency. I've worked very hard in H.R. 2200 to focus on their professionalism. But they need tools and they need the tools that will allow us to focus on the security of these important elements of transportation, and, as well, the job engine of our community and our Nation.

Many Americans use mass transit. Many Americans use rail. Any irreversible, tragic terrorist act can impact the economy of this Nation. As we were reminded by the tragic events in Russia over the weekend and in other cities around the world over the last several years, rail and mass transit systems are prime targets for terrorist acts. When they're shut down, the economy can shut down.

This resolution recognizes TSA as being uniquely positioned to lead Federal efforts to secure our Nation's rail and mass transit systems, and recognizes the National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program as a valuable resource, which my friend from Alabama has worked on. I might also say that this effort today, this resolution, is also to save lives. As such, it is critical that TSA's security efforts share our commitment to securing these systems.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution and send a message about the importance of protecting our people, our infrastructure, and our economy.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 28, sponsored by my friend and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE). We know the Nation's surface transportation systems are designed for accessibility and efficiency, making them vulnerable to terrorist attack. When hardening the transportation sector from terrorist attack, we must construct and finance a system of deterrence, protection and response that effectively reduces the possibility and consequences of another terrorist attack without unduly interfering with travel, commerce and civil liberties.

In the 9/11 Act of 2007, Congress mandated that DHS take certain steps to ensure the security of our Nation's

public transportation systems. More than 2 years later, a number of mandates have gone unmet by the department, and this resolution expresses the sense of Congress that DHS should actually implement those mandates. It is time for DHS to move beyond the transportation sector-specific plans that identify and evaluate risk, to implementing risk reduction measures.

This resolution resolves that TSA should continue to enhance the security of mass transit and rail transportation systems, continue the development of the canine explosive detection program, and enhance on-line training programs. The resolution also takes special note that more attention is needed for school transportation systems.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to vote for this, and yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I'd like to thank the staff of the Homeland Security Committee, and as well, the staff director of the Transportation Security Committee, Mike Beland, and acknowledge the chairman of the committee for working with me and acknowledging the importance of this particular amendment and this bill.

Let me just say, as I close, we have already enunciated the parameters of securing mass transit and rail. We understand that we are behind in that effort.

□ 1330

I know there are committed, dedicated members of the Homeland Security Department and efforts that are ready to go. We need to give them the tools that they can work with. Even over the last couple of days as we look at actions that may be at first glance perceived to be innocent individuals intruding into the parameters of the White House, we know that we have to be on alert, because no action should be taken in a simple or, if you will, non-serious manner.

So I stand today to say that this legislation, though a resolution, is serious because it emphasizes a commitment for tools and saving lives. I am delighted that my colleagues on the committee, in a bipartisan manner, have supported this. I'd like to acknowledge the ranking member of this committee, Mr. DENT; and I'd ask my colleagues to support this legislation, Mr. Speaker.

I believe this is a critical issue. H. Res. 28 addresses the critical issue of surface transportation, and I encourage my colleagues to vote "aye."

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, for a second consecutive year, while Americans gathered with family and friends to celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday, terrorists executed deadly attacks on innocent people that were in transit, on foreign rail systems.

Just last week, two separate bombings in Russia underscored that passenger rail systems remain enticing targets for acts of terrorism.

It has been nearly six months since this body overwhelmingly passed the legislation to authorize TSA's rail and mass transit security activities (H.R. 2200).

Unfortunately, to date, the Senate has failed to move on H.R. 2200.

The Senate also has yet to confirm a new TSA Assistant Secretary to fulfill the rail and mass transit security mandates that Congress overwhelmingly approved in 2007, with the passage of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act.

Plainly, there is still much to be done to secure rail and mass transit systems in the United States from bombings like the ones that occurred in Russia over the weekend, and other acts of terrorism.

In remembrance of those events, as well as the bombings of passenger rail and mass transit systems in Madrid, Spain; London, England; and Mumbai, India that occurred in recent years, H. Res. 28 instructs TSA to strengthen its efforts to secure rail and mass transit systems across the country and to build on existing programs that have shown promise.

This resolution recognizes TSA as being uniquely positioned to lead Federal efforts to secure rail and mass transit systems in the United States, and identifies the National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program as an effective and valuable resource.

House passage of both the 9/11 Act in 2007 and H.R. 2200 earlier this year by overwhelming majorities has emphasized the House of Representatives' commitment to strengthening security of rail and mass transit systems.

I urge my colleagues to join with me in supporting this resolution and reaffirming our strong commitment to strengthening the security of our rail and mass transit systems.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 28, which expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) should increase and enhance its efforts to secure rail and mass transit systems in ways that are consistent with the 9/11 Act and H.R. 2200.

I would like to acknowledge Speaker PELOSI and Chairman THOMPSON for their leadership in bringing this important resolution to the floor. I would also like to thank my colleague Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON-LEE, who authored this resolution recognizing TSA and its programs and urging the Administration to continue its efforts protecting the infrastructure of our Nation.

11,300,000 passengers depend on our Nation's mass transit lines as a means of transportation, and more than 25 million children depend on the school transportation system. My district, the 37th district of California, is a key transportation hub as well. Nearly 45 percent of all U.S. imports travel through the District. As such, it is critical that TSA shares our commitment to securing these systems.

H. Res. 28 recognizes TSA for leading Federal efforts to secure our Nation's rail and mass transit systems, the National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program as a valuable resource, and the successful Online Learning Center that ensures those responsible for securing against terrorist attacks on our transportation systems are highly trained. So I am happy to stand in support of H. Res. 28.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I support this resolution because we cannot take the safety of our Nation's infrastructure for granted. We need to urge TSA to take all the action necessary to adequately protect our Nation and expand upon programs with a proven record of success, such as the Online Learning Center.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 28.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 28, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE TRAINING RESTORATION ACT

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3963) to provide specialized training to Federal air marshals.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3963

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Criminal Investigative Training Restoration Act".

SEC. 2. FEDERAL AIR MARSHALS.

Section 44917 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(e) CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE TRAINING PROGRAM.—

"(1) NEW EMPLOYEE TRAINING.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of the Criminal Investigative Training Restoration Act, the Federal Air Marshal Service shall require Federal air marshals hired after such date to complete the criminal investigative training program at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center as part of basic training for Federal air marshals.

"(2) EXISTING EMPLOYEES.—A Federal air marshal who has previously completed the criminal investigative training program shall not be required to repeat such program.

"(3) ALTERNATIVE TRAINING.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of the Criminal Investigative Training Restoration Act, an air marshal hired before such date who has not completed the criminal investigative training program shall be required to complete a alternative training program, as determined by the Federal Law Enforcement Center, that provides the training necessary to bridge the gap between the mixed basic police training, the Federal air marshal programs already completed by the

Federal air marshal and the criminal investigative training provided through the criminal investigative training program. Any such alternative program shall be deemed to have met the standards of the criminal investigative training program.

"(4) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Not less than \$3,000,000 is authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2010 and 2011 to carry out this subsection.

"(5) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to reclassify Federal air marshals as criminal investigators."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill and yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, I'm grateful to the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN), who I have worked with before, who's worked tirelessly on this issue. I'm honored to be a cosponsor of this important legislation, and I do applaud his work.

This legislation will help to bolster the effectiveness and morale of the Federal Air Marshal Service, many of whom I visited with over my tenure as a member of the Homeland Security Committee. In my position as chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection, I have promoted the need to keep our modes of transportation secure and to ensure that employees of the Department of Homeland Security have professional growth opportunities and are treated fairly and given the opportunity to exercise their concern and have this Congress and this executive listen to their concerns. This bill works towards both of these important objectives.

The Federal Air Marshal Service had to quickly expand its size and efforts in the wake of attacks on September 11, 2001. This bill helps to restore more training measures in a way that is consistent with that necessary expansion. In addition, this legislation provides for potential promotion opportunities.

I would like to note that this provision was offered and rejected during the markup of H.R. 2200, the TSA authorization bill that I wrote earlier and which passed the House in a bipartisan manner. At that time I did not feel as though it contained the necessary language to ensure that it would not adversely impact the salaries and benefits of Federal air marshals. Working